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CONTACT: Susan Sullam, Cardin

410-962-4436

CARDIN, MIKULSKI ANNOUNCE FEDERAL FUNDING TO PURCHASE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT FOR CARROLL COUNTY FIRE STATION DESTROYED BY FIRE

Station lost sleeping quarters in fire; pagers will be used to alert firefighters to respond from home until a new station is erected

WASHINGTON, D.C. – **U.S. Senators Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-Md.) today announced the Sykesville Freedom District Volunteer Fire Department won \$35,586 in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program to purchase communications equipment. As a member of the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator Mikulski fights each year to increase federal funding for the fire grants program. Senator Cardin is a member of the Finance and Budget committees.

"The Sykesville Freedom District Volunteer Department suffered the devastating loss of their station last year and now more than ever they need resources to help them get back on their feet," **Senator Cardin** said. "This grant provides them with the funding that is needed to purchase new communications equipment so that these brave firefighters can continue to protect us from harm and perform their jobs safely and efficiently."

"I know how important this funding is to Maryland communities – often it's the difference between life and death," **Senator Mikulski** said. "The brave men and women of the Sykesville Freedom District Volunteer Fire Department lost their fire station almost exactly a year ago. I am proud that this grant program can help them get back on their feet. First responders protect our homes and communities, and the federal government has a responsibility to protect them by providing them with the tools they need to do their jobs."

The grant funds will allow Sykesville Freedom District Volunteer Fire Department to purchase forty pagers and two message display boards for the station. The fire department's station was destroyed by fire during last year's severe snowstorms, and as a result, the station no longer has sleeping quarters. The pagers and message displays will allow the fire department to alert its members to respond to the station for emergency calls. For more information, please contact Bill Flanagan at 410-795-9311.

AFGP grants fund firefighting equipment, personal protection equipment, training, firefighting vehicles, firefighter/first responder safety projects, and staffing recruitment and retention, as well as public fire safety education.

Since 2001, Maryland fire departments and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) units have received more than \$93 million in AFGP funding, nearly \$2 million of which has gone to fire departments and EMS units in Carroll County.

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